

## Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN NODS-00

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TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY  
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S E C R E T STATE 136857

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PPDC, KS

SUBJECT: THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT PARK

1. FOLLOWING FOR YOUR INFORMATION IS TEXT OF LETTER FROM  
THE PRESIDENT TO KOREAN PRESIDENT PARK CHUNG-HEE WHICH WAS  
DELIVERED IN PERSON BY DR. BRZEZINSKI IN SEOUL MAY 25.

2. BEGIN TEXT: MAY 17, 1978

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

(A) THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND LETTER OF MAY 3 ON THE EMER-  
GENCY LANDING OF THE KOREAN AIRLINE FLIGHT IN THE SOVIET  
UNION. WE WERE GLAD TO BE OF ASSISTANCE, BUT REGRET THE  
TRAGIC AND UNNECESSARY LOSS OF LIFE.

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(B) IN MY LETTER OF JULY 21, 1977, I REITERATED TO YOU THE  
COMMITMENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE SECURITY OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF KOREA; THAT COMMITMENT REMAINS FIRM. ALTHOUGH  
THE SPEED OF DEVELOPMENTS IN OUR CONGRESS OFFERED MINIMAL  
TIME FOR CONSULTATION WITH YOU PRIOR TO MY RECENT DECISION  
TO DEFER TWO-THIRDS OF THE FIRST PHASE OF WITHDRAWAL OF

GROUND COMBAT FORCES UNTIL NEXT YEAR, I MADE THAT DECISION  
IN THE LIGHT OF YOUR VIEWS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF ADEQUATE

COMPENSATORY MILITARY MEASURES BEING TAKEN IN PARALLEL  
WITH THE CHANGES IN OUR DEPLOYMENTS. AS I HAVE ASSURED  
YOU BEFORE, I SHALL IMPLEMENT THIS PROGRAM IN A MANNER  
WHICH PRESERVES A MILITARY BALANCE ON THE PENINSULA, AND  
THUS PROTECTS THE SECURITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA.  
SHOULD CIRCUMSTANCES AFFECTING THE BALANCE CHANGE IN ANY  
SIGNIFICANT WAY, WE WILL ASSESS THOSE CHANGES IN CLOSE  
CONSULTATION WITH YOU.

(C) THE UNITED STATES IS DETERMINED TO HELP MAINTAIN PEACE  
AND AN ENVIRONMENT FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH IN NORTHEAST ASIA.  
WE FULLY APPRECIATE KOREA'S MAJOR SACRIFICES AND FIRM  
DEDICATION TO THE SECURITY AND DEFENSE OF YOUR NATION  
AGAINST AGGRESSION. WE SHALL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE  
APPROPRIATE ASSISTANCE TO HELP STRENGTHEN AND MODERNIZE  
YOUR ARMED FORCES.

(D) IN VIEW OF THE DANGERS OF CONTINUED CONFRONTATION  
AND THE HEAVY BURDENS OF DEFENSE WHICH YOUR SOCIETY MUST  
SHOULDER, I HOPE YOU WILL CONTINUE TO LOOK FOR WAYS OF  
REDUCING TENSIONS ON THE PENINSULA AND FACILITATING THE  
RESUMPTION OF A SERIOUS NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE. WE ARE FULLY  
AWARE OF THE DANGEROUS NATURE OF THE THREAT YOU FACE. WE  
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ARE PREPARED TO CONSULT CLOSELY ON POSSIBLE STEPS WHICH  
MIGHT EASE THIS SITUATION.

(E) REST ASSURED THAT WE UNDERSTAND WHAT THE NORTH KOREANS  
ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE THROUGH THEIR CURRENT EFFORTS TO  
LURE THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT INTO DIRECT BILATERAL  
DISCUSSIONS. I HAVE EMPHASIZED TO ALL CONCERNED THAT WE  
WILL NOT ENGAGE IN ANY SUCH TALKS WHICH DO NOT INCLUDE  
REPRESENTATIVES OF YOUR GOVERNMENT AS FULL AND EQUAL  
PARTICIPANTS. SUGGESTIONS BY THE NORTH KOREANS THAT THEY  
WILL NOT TALK WITH YOUR GOVERNMENT, BUT ONLY WITH A SUC-  
CESSOR REGIME, ARE COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE, AND I MADE MY  
VIEWS ON THIS POINT CLEAR TO BOTH MR. TITO AND MR.  
CEAUCESCU WHEN THEY WERE RECENTLY IN WASHINGTON.

(F) I APPLAUD THE REPEATED WILLINGNESS OF YOUR GOVERNMENT  
TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES WITH THE NORTH IN A PRAGMATIC  
DIALOGUE. WE STAND READY TO SUPPORT ANY PROMISING  
INITIATIVES WHICH YOU MAY SUGGEST. THESE ARE MATTERS ON  
WHICH WE MUST CONTINUE TO ACT IN CLOSE CONSULTATION AND  
COORDINATION.

(G) I HAVE BEEN INFORMED OF THE RECENT VISIT TO WASHINGTON OF YOUR MINISTER OF ENERGY AND RESOURCES AND OF THE FRUITFUL DISCUSSIONS HE HAD WITH MEMBERS OF MY GOVERNMENT. THE UNITED STATES INTENDS TO REMAIN A RELIABLE SUPPLIER

OF NUCLEAR POWER TECHNOLOGY AND FUEL AND WE ARE PLEASED TO BE ABLE TO WORK TOGETHER WITH YOU IN YOUR MAJOR ELECTRIC POWER EXPANSION PROGRAM.

(H) I HAVE NOTED WITH GRATIFICATION THE RELAXATION IN RECENT MONTHS OF CERTAIN RESTRICTIONS ON POLITICAL EXPRESSION IN SOUTH KOREA. WHILE THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF YOUR GOVERNMENT ARE NOT MY DIRECT CONCERN, YOU ARE AWARE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE'S STRONG COMMITMENT TO THE  
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RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL. I AM CONFIDENT THAT YOU WILL FIND YOUR SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENT STRENGTHENED BY THE FREE INTERPLAY OF IDEAS, AND I LOOK FORWARD CONFIDENTLY TO FURTHER STEPS IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS ALONG THE ROAD OF POLITICAL EVOLUTION AND FREEDOM ON WHICH YOU ARE EMBARKED.

(I) IN CLOSING, I WOULD LIKE TO COMMEND YOU AND YOUR GOVERNMENT FOR TAKING A NUMBER OF DIFFICULT ACTIONS DESIGNED TO OVERCOME SOME OF THE STRAINS THAT HAVE TROUBLED OUR RELATIONS IN THIS LAST YEAR. THESE HAVE BEEN VERY HELPFUL. THROUGH OUR COMBINED EFFORTS I BELIEVE WE CAN FULLY RESTORE THE SPECIAL FRIENDSHIP AND COMMON INTEREST BINDING OUR PEOPLES.

SINCERELY, JIMMY CARTER END TEXT.  
VANCE

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